



# Aquatic Weed Control Program

March 8, 2016

*Department of Environmental Quality*



## *What are Noxious Aquatic Weeds?*

They are invasive species. Non-native aquatic plants that have detrimental effects on our water resources.



## *History of Program*

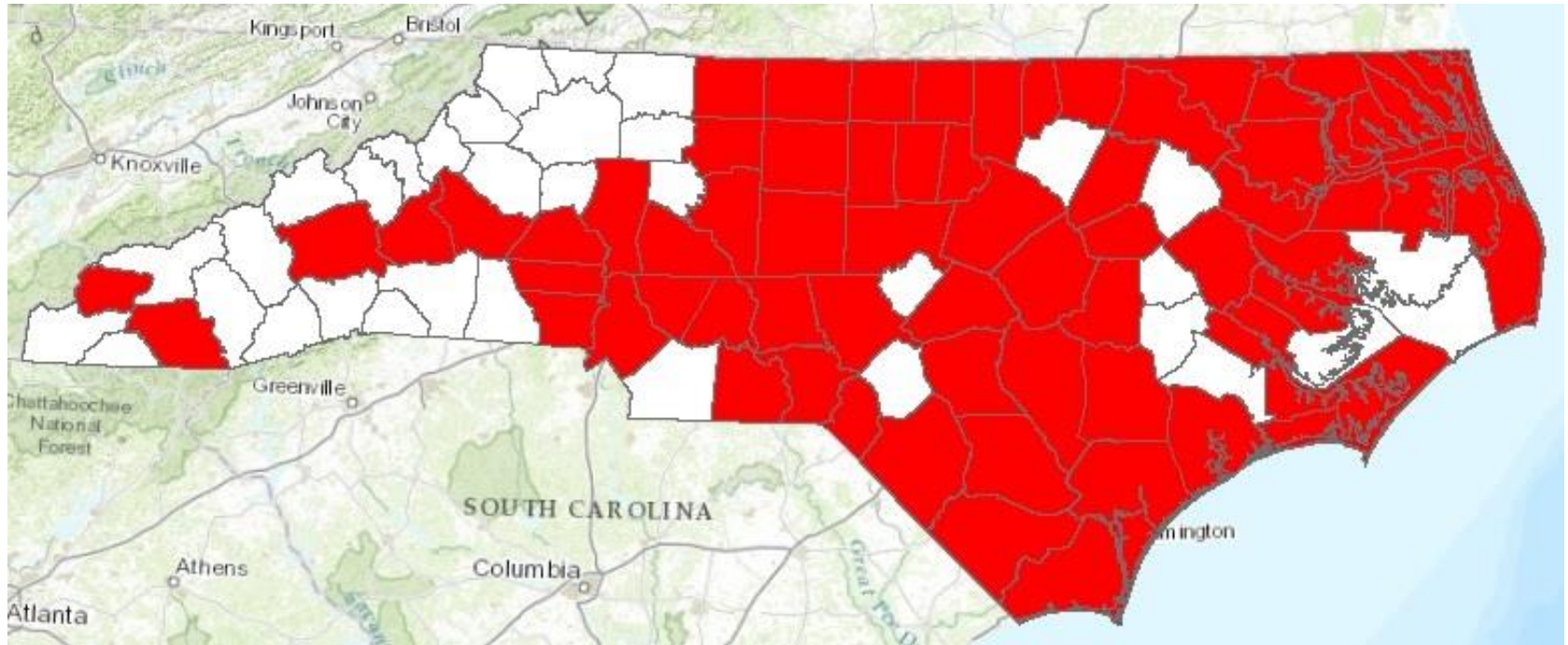
- The program was developed to address the invasion of Hydrilla. A particularly noxious aquatic plant that was introduced to Wake County circa 1980.
- An interagency task force recommended that a state program be created that would provide technical and financial assistance to local governments.
- Aquatic Weed Control Act of 1991
- **NCGS 113A-223.** Direct the control, eradication, and regulation of noxious aquatic weeds so as to protect and preserve human health, safety, and the beneficial uses of the waters of the State and to prevent injury to property and beneficial plant and animal life.





## *Who is Impacted in N.C.?*

- **Nearly every county has been or is being impacted by Aquatic Weeds**



## *How does it Spread?*

- Plant fragments, seeds and other propagules flow downstream
- Birds and other wildlife move it
- ‘Hitchhiking’ on boats and other contaminated equipment
- People intentionally introduce



Photo: Alligatorweed choking the Scuppernong River

# Risks

- **Public health & safety**

- Cause taste and odor issues in municipal water.
- Creates habitat for mosquito breeding.
- Impedes water flow causing flooding conditions.



- **Negative Economic Impact**

- Interference with recreational activities such as fishing and boating.
- NC has 1.5M anglers who expend \$1.5B annually.
- Property value.

- **Threatened and endangered species and ecological imbalance**

- Invasive species is a major factor in driving native organisms to T&E

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# *Lake Waccamaw, NC*

## *Hydrilla infesting ~600 acres*



AT RISK:

- 6 endemic aquatic species found no where else in the world
- Outstanding Water Resource

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# *How the Legislature Has Responded*

## **Creation of the Aquatic Weed Control Program**

- Program Benefits: Provides technical assistance and implements management activities
- Annual Budget: Up to \$500K + matches
- Staffing: 1 FTE + temporary employees
- Project tenure: Often 10+ years to eradicate.
- Financial and operational assistance provided to:
  - Local govt. (County & Municipality)
  - Soil & Water Districts
  - Drainage Districts
  - Public Utilities
  - Government Agencies





## *Aquatic Weed Control Program Expenditures*

<b>Year</b>	<b>DWR Contributions</b>	<b>Cooperator Contributions</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>
FY 2011-2012	322,877	706,099	1,028,976
FY 2012-2013	419,319	945,030	1,364,349
FY 2013-2014	641,211	1,138,802	1,780,013
FY 2014-2015	453,720	983,454	1,437,174
FY 2015-2016	408,651	574,413	983,064

## *Projected need*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Lake Projects</b>	<b>Non-lake Projects</b>	<b>Total</b>
FY 2016-2017	500,000	150,000	650,000
FY 2017-2018	550,000	200,000	750,000
FY 2018-2019	550,000	200,000	750,000
FY 2019-2020	600,000	200,000	800,000
FY 2020-2021	600,000	200,000	800,000

# *Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Management Plan*

## **State-Wide ANS Plan Complete:**

- Multi-Agency collaborative effort between:
  - NCDEQ
    - Water Resources, Coastal Management, Marine Fisheries
  - NCDA
  - NCSU
  - NC WRC
  - US F&W
- Plan establishes a road map for agencies to collaboratively work towards addressing ANS, which is a multi-jurisdictional issue
- Signed by DEQ, WRC and NCDA 2016.



## Recommendations

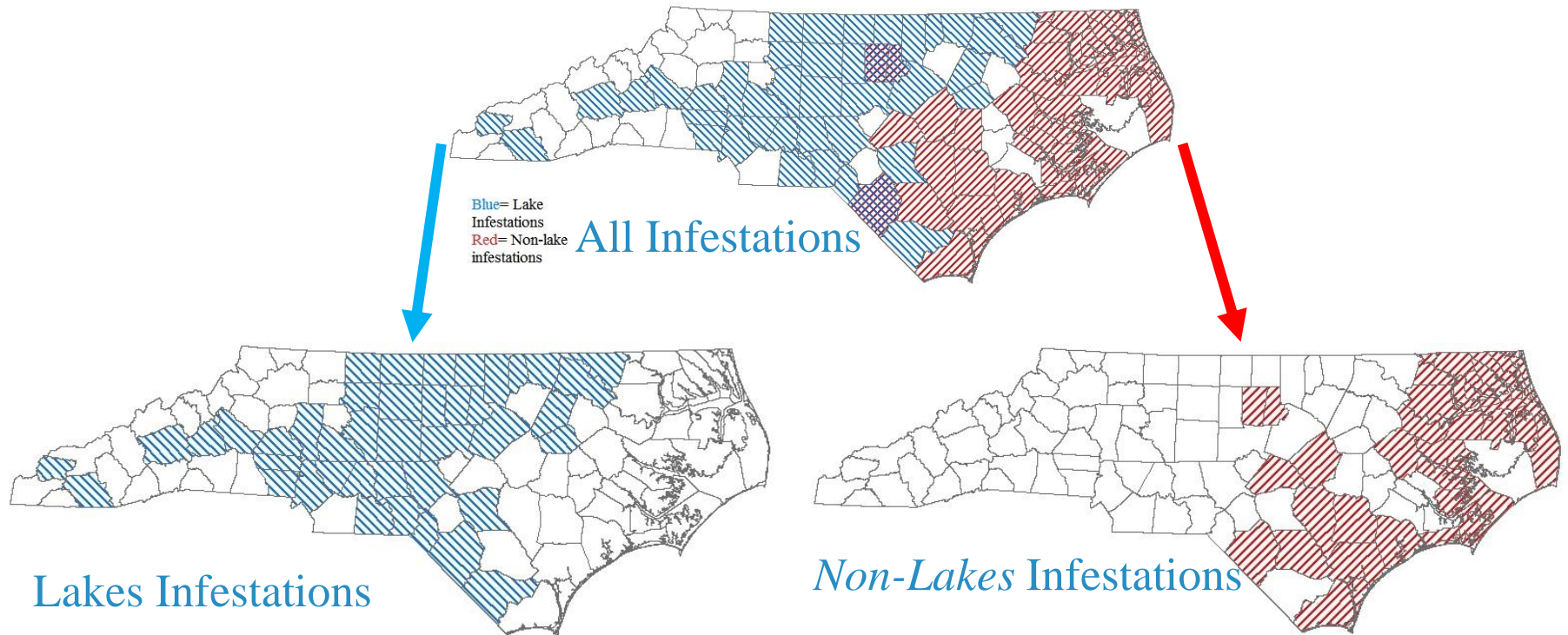
Amend language in Shallow Draft Dredging Fund to restore operations to **all waters of the state**

Current language limits operations to “**waters of the state located within lakes**”



# Why do we need the change?

- Eastern NC noxious aquatic weeds problems are non-lakes
- Need to treat the rivers to keep the weeds from spreading into lakes.
- Some noxious aquatic weeds are unique to non-lakes



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## *Contact Information*

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